

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 8215

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (WOLFF, LESTER)

SUBJ: CODEL WOLFF

SUMMARY: DURING CODEL WOLFF'S VISIT TO BANGKOK APRIL 14-17
CHAIRMAN WOLFF ADDRESSED THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT'S CLUB OF
BANGKOK AND THE EAST ASIAN REGIONAL NARCOTICS CONFERENCE AND
CALLS WERE MADE ON THE PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN MINISTER AND
THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE. SUBSTANTIVELY, THE FOCUS OF THE
VISIT WAS ON NARCOTICS. VISIT AND CHAIRMAN WOLFF'S REMARKS WERE
WIDELY AND FAVORABLY REPORTED BY THE MEDIA. END SUMMARY.

1. CODEL WOLFF, CONSISTING OF CHAIRMAN WOLFF, REP BIAGGI AND
REP EVANS AND STAFF ARRIVED IN BANGKOK APRIL 14 FOR A FULL
SCHEDULE OF BRIEFINGS, CALLS AND PUBLIC APPEARANCES.
REPRESENTATIVES HYDE AND STARK TRAVELED SEPARATELY AND
FOLLOWED PROGRAMS DESIGNED FOR THEIR INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS.

2. IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL BANGKOK, CONGRESSMAN WOLFF
ADDRESSED BANGKOK FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB. ADDRESS WAS
WELL ATTENDED AND PROMINENTLY REPORTED IN BANGKOK MEDIA.

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AFTERNOON MISSION BRIEFING WAS FOLLOWED BY EVENING RECEPTION
AT WHICH CODEL HAD OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH BROAD RANGE OF BOTH
U.S. AND THAI OFFICIALS WORKING IN NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION.

3. ON FRIDAY MORNING, APRIL 15, THE CODEL ATTENDED A PLENARY
SESSION OF THE EAST ASIAN REGIONAL NARCOTICS CONFERENCE.
PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND THANIN KRAIWICHIAN AND CHAIRMAN WOLFF

WERE THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AT THIS SESSION WHICH RECEIVED EXTENSIVE AND POSITIVE MEDIA COVERAGE AND WAS ATTENDED BY SOME 200 THAI AND U.S. OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF THE PRESS. THE REMAINDER OF FRIDAY WAS DEVOTED TO OFFICIAL CALLS ON THE PRIME MINISTER, THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND A DINNER HOSTED BY THE PRIME MINISTER.

4. THE MEETING OF CONGRESSMAN WOLFF AND BIAGGI WITH PRIME MINISTER THANIN WAS MOST CORDIAL. CONGRESSMAN WOLFF EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE EFFORTS BEING MADE BY THE THAI GOVERNMENT IN THE NARCOTICS FIELD AND THE PRIME MINISTER EXPLAINED AT SOME LENGTH THE NECESSITY OF REORGANIZING THE THAI PROGRAM SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY IN ORDER TO OBTAIN HONEST AND RELIABLE PERSONNEL. TURNING TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, CONGRESSMAN WOLFF EXPLAINED HIS ROLE IN CONGRESS AND STRESSED THE CONTINUING INTEREST OF THE US IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION OVER THESE ASSURANCES NOTING THAT IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF JAPAN WERE TO QTE TAKE CARE OF ASIA WHILE THE US WITHDREW UNQTE. THE PRIME MINISTER THEN SPOKE WITH CONSIDERABLE ELOQUENCE OF THE NEED FOR FREE WORLD UNITY IN THE FACE OF COMMUNIST DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE WORLD DOMINATION. HE NOTED THAT THE US WOULD BE THE LAST DOMINO BUT THAT IT SEEMED TO HIM IT COULD HARLY AFFORD TO SEE ITS FRIENDS GO DOWN ONE BY ONE. THE PRIME MINISTER MADE CLEAR THAT HE WAS NOT BEGGING FOR AID BUT WAS DOING HIS UTMOST TO ASSURE THAT FREEDOM-LOVING COUNTRIES STOOD TOGETHER.

5. FOREIGN MINISTER UPPADIT PACHARIYANGKUN RECEIVED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONGRESSMAN WOLFF AND BIAGGI CORDIALLY AND GAVE A LUNCHEON IN THEIR HONOR. THE MINISTER STRESSED THE LONG FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THAILAND AND THE UNITED STATES AND WLCOMED THEIR VISIT TO THAILAND. THAILAND, HE SAID, IS STRUGGLING TO DEVELOP ITSELF AND IS NOT SEEKING HANDOUTS BUT STILL REQUIRES HELP TO HELP ITSELF. IN RESPONDING, CHAIRMAN WOLFF ASSURED THE MINISTER THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS NOT TURNING ITS BACK ON ASIA JUST BECAUSE OF THE "BAD EXPERIENCE" THAT THE US HAD HERE. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE PRESS HAS LEFT THE STRONG IMPRESSION WITH MANY PEOPLE THAT THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WOULD DISPLAY A MUCH REDUCED INTEREST IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD BUT THAT THIS WAS NOT THE CASE. HE NOTED THE NEW ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE ALONG GEOGRAPHIC LINES WOULD HELP ENSURE THAT THE LEGISLATURE RETAINED AN ADTIVE INTEREST IN ASIA. THE NEW CONGRESS AND THE NEW ADMINISTRATION ENJOY A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP, HE SAID, AND THE JOINT TRAVEL ON THIS TRIP BY MEMBERS OF BOTH THE CONGRESS AND THE EXECUTIVE IS AN INDICATION OF THAT COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP. THE FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE CHAIRMAN'S

ASSURANCES OF CONTINUED U.S. INTEREST IN THAILAND AND ASEAN WHICH HE FOUND BOTH REASSURING AND ENCOURAGING.

6. DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE, GENERAL LEK NAEOMALI SOLICITED CONTINUED US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ENABLE THE THAI ARMED FORCES TO MEET THE MILITARY THREAT TO THAILAND FROM INDOCHINA, PARTICULARLY VIETNAM. IN RESPONSE TO CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI'S QUESTIONS, LEK DESCRIBED THAILAND'S SECURITY CONCERNS ALMOST TOTALLY IN TERMS OF AN EXTERNAL THREAT AND MENTIONED THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF ASSISTANCE RECEIVED FROM VIETNAM AND LAOS. LEK SAID THE MOVEMENT OF VIETNAMESE TROOPS TO THE VICINITY OF THE MEKONG RIVER IN LAOS, THE BUILDING OF A PIPELINE AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE INSERTION OF WEAPONS ON THE LAO SIDE OF THE MEKONG HAD TO BE CONSIDERED ACTIONS DIRECTLY THREATENING THAILAND'S SECURITY. THE THAI ARMED FORCES GREATEST NEED, HE SAID, WAS MORE MODERN WEAPONS TO BE ABLE TO MEET THE THREAT POSED BY A WELL EQUIPPED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VIETNAM. HE CITED THAILAND'S BUDGETARY LIMITATIONS AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT FRIENDLY COUNTRIES WOULD HELP THAILAND OBTAIN THE MODERN WEAPONRY REQUIRED. CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI EXPRESSED HIS UNDERSTANDING FOR THAI CONCERNS AND ASKED THE DEPUTY MINISTER HOW THE THAI VIEWED FMS CREDITS. THE GENERAL RESPONDED THAT THAILAND IS VERY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING AND USING FMS CREDITS BUT NOTED THAT DELIVERIES THROUGH THIS SYSTEM ARE SLOW.

7. ON SATURDAY, APRIL 16, A GROUP OF CODEL STAFFERS ACCOMPANIED BY DEA AND THAI OFFICIALS MADE A TRIP TO CHIANG MAI.

8. CODEL WOLFF HELD A PRE-DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE SUNDAY APRIL 17 WHICH IS BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL.

9. COMMENT. THE CODEL VISIT WAS A WELCOME ONE. THE RTG CLEARLY WENT OUT OF ITS WAY TO DEMONSTRATE ITS SERIOUSNESS OF INTENT IN COOPERATING IN INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION EFFORTS. ALL MEETINGS WERE EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND THE APPEALS FOR CONTINUED US INTEREST AND ASSISTANCE WERE LOW KEY AND INDIRECT. THE REMARKS BY CONGRESSMAN WOLFF CONCERNING US INTEREST IN THAILAND AND SOUTHEAST ASIA WERE RIGHT ON TARGET AS THAI OFFICIALDOM HAS BEEN UNCERTAIN WITH REGARD TO U.S. POLICY TOWARD THIS PART OF THE WORLD.
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Message Attributes

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TAGS: OREP, (WOLFF, LESTER)
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